upgradation. In addition, rate of depreciation allowance for machinery under TUFS has been raised to 50%.

Decline in Textile Exports

1160. DR. M.N. DAS: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the first half of the current financial year, namely, April to September, there has been a steady decline of Textile Exports as well as of export of Crafts and readymade garments;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the exports of raw cotton, cotton yarn and fabrics have rapidly declined even though the production of textile yarns by indigenous industries remains same as before; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR) (a) and (b) There is decline in the textile exports during the first half of the current financial year but the percentage decline is much less during the second quarter (5.1%) as compared to the first quarter (22.9%).

(c) The main reason for decline in textile exports are general slowdown in the economies of some of our major trading partners like the US; increased competition from countries like China, Bangladesh; and high production cost, low productivity due to lack of modernisation of textile industry.

Deline in garment exports

1161. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether during April, 2001, the readymade garments exports were US$ 63 million which represent a decline of 13 per cent as compared to the corresponding period of 2000-01;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons for the decline;

(c) which are the major countries or regions that are importing readymade garments from India; and

(d) what are the steps being taken to improve the readymade garments exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) As per DGCI&S data, the exports of readymade garments during the period April 2001 amounted to US$ 363.0 million as against the exports of US$ 417.5 million during the same period of 2000, recording a negative growth of 13.1%.

(b) It was mainly due to general slowdown in the economies of some of our major trading partners like the US and increased competition from countries like China, Bangladesh etc.

(c) The U.S.A.,EU Member States, U.A.E., C.I.S. countries, Japan, Saudi, Arabia, Australia, South Africa etc. are the major importing countries of our readymade garments.

(d) Government have also been taking several steps from time to time to strengthen and promote textile exports including readymade garment. Some of the important initiatives are:-

(i) The Government has de-reserved the woven segment of readymade garment from the SSI sector. It has also announced the de-reservation of knitted segment in the Budget 2002-03.

(ii) The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operational from 1-4-1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of this sector so that it can become more competitive in international trade.

(iii) Weaving, processing and garment machinery, which are covered under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated depreciation at the rate of 50%.

(iv) Technology Mission for Cotton has been launched for initiating focussed steps for boosting production, productivity and quality of cotton for manufacture and export of competitive downstream textile products.

(v) Nattional Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its six branches and Apparel Training Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile industry especially apparel in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

(vi) The import of a large number of garment machinery has been allowed under concessional custom duty.

Norms for Promotion and Transfer of State under Shops and Establishment Rules

1162. SHRI VIJAY SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the existing norms for promotion of staff under Shops and Establishment Act in National Textiles Corporation;

(b) the member of staff of the Corporation who have been promoted and transferred under Shops and Establishment Rules during the last three years and current year;

(c) whether the salesmen and salesgirls have been promoted to assistant or clerk grade in Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan of National Textiles Corporation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR) (a) Shops and Establishment Act does not prescribe norms for promotion of staff.

(b) During the period 3 salesmen were promoted as Shop Managers in NTC (WBABO). In the last three years, 8 employees were transferred (including 3 in the current year) in the Retail Marketing Division of NTC (MP).

(c) and (d) There is no channel of promotion from the cadre of sales person to clerical cadre in NTC. NTC has reported that there are no such instances during NTC (DPR) in the last three years.

Patenting the handloom items

1163. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering patenting important Tamil Nadu based traditional goods like Kanjeevaram silk sarees and other handloom items; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) Traditional items like Kanjeevaram silk sarees are not patentable under the provisions of the Patents Act, 1970.

(b) Does not arise.